

commence building: one or two other congregations have been looking out, it is said, for accommodation in the same neighbourhood.—A bridge has recently been erected at Haddington, by Messrs. J. and A. More, Gimmernmills, for the purpose of connecting these grain-mills with the town. The bridge is of wood-work, and rests on three stone piers. The cost is said to have been between 800*l.* and 1,000*l.*—It is proposed to erect, at Haddington, a covered market, about 6,000 feet square, or nearly two-thirds the area of the Edinburgh Corn-Exchange. The structure is meant to be plain, but substantial.—A meeting was lately held, at Arbroath, in the north of Scotland, in order to consider the propriety of erecting a model lodging-house for factory girls, when three of the inhabitants forthwith subscribed 10*l.* each, three of them 25*l.* each, and four of them 50*l.* each. Smaller sums were also subscribed, and a committee was appointed to increase the subscription.—An English company, it is said, is about to light the town of Newry with gas made from water, at the rate of 1*s.* per thousand cubic feet!

THE NATIONAL WASHINGTON MONUMENT, NEW YORK.

At a meeting of the New York Historical Society, on the 5th November (reported in the *New York Literary World*), Mr. J. B. Varnum read a paper upon the National Washington Monument and other kindred subjects, from which we obtain the following particulars:—

Since the laying of the corner stone, about two years since, the work has regularly progressed. The foundation is at the bottom 81 feet square. It is built of a species of blue rock, a material which is continued up 17 feet above ground. Here the marble work for the obelisk commences. This obelisk is to be 500 feet high, 55 feet square at the base, and 33 feet square at the top. The walls are 15 feet thick at the commencement, leaving a space inside 25 feet square, which will be of the same dimensions all the way up. The obelisk is now 76 feet high, and it is anticipated that at least 50 feet will be added during another season.

The outside is constructed of what is known as Symington's large crystal marble, procured from the vicinity of Baltimore. The main body of the wall is of blue gneiss, and with this the interior is lined, except where blocks presented by states or associations have been inserted. The quality of the material and its capacity to sustain pressure and resist frost were most satisfactorily tested in some experiments made at two different times, under the direction of the department of the Interior.

Thirty states and one territory have determined to present blocks of stone to be inserted on the inside, of which five are already in the wall, and nine are on the ground. About fifty associations have requested permission to make similar donations, and a number have been received. Some of them are of elaborate workmanship and beautiful material, almost every prominent kind of stone or marble in the Union being there in one or more specimens.

There have been expended on the work up to this time 120,000 dollars. The estimated cost of the whole shaft will be 500,000 dollars.

A large additional subscription was received on the spot from visitors, within a week or two after the passing of the compromise bills, which seemed to indicate that zeal in the cause increased in proportion as the prospect of preserving the Union were brightened.

In the city of New York, a gentleman distinguished for his liberality, the purchaser of Washington's farewell address, headed the subscription with 500 dollars; but the agent only succeeded in collecting altogether about 1,500 dollars in sums of 50 dollars, 20 dollars, and 10 dollars.

The monthly receipts from all parts of the country now average about 2,800 dollars, and if they continue to come in to that extent, very fair progress will be made on the work, as the sum already expended was much of it laid out on the foundation, in providing a steam-engine, and securing a stock of materials.

In reply to objections urged against the

monument, Mr. Varnum said, if you take the mass of mankind you find but a small number, comparatively, who study books of any kind, especially history, and of those who do read, comparatively few preserve a distinct recollection of prominent characters and leading events. Upon such persons objects presented to the senses make the greatest impression, and a monument or a painting leads to inquiry, and keeps the subject constantly before the mind. But it is a mistake to suppose that the chief object of a monument to an individual is to preserve his memory. Is it not rather a memento of the value set upon the deceased by those who reared the obelisk, a testimonial of the appreciation of him by those who survived? The best evidence of patriotism is a disposition to make some sacrifice for the cause, we believe to be just; and so the best evidence of gratitude is some voluntary offering from our treasures, something more than the mere empty thanks which cost us no individual effort to bestow. Hence the monuments which are by far the most interesting in their associations, are those which have been erected by voluntary contributions,—not by an appropriation from the public treasury, which, though all are taxed for it, no one feels,—but by some little personal sacrifice. A mere pile of rude stones, each of which is brought by a different individual, speaks much more forcibly for the respect entertained for the dead than a gorgeous monument built by the decree of a parliament or the will of a ruler.

Every city in Europe is filled with monuments; but very few of them are the work of popular enthusiasm, or commemorate anything more than a royal visit, or an exalted rank,—monuments erected by town councils or the owners of property around particular parks, as acts of civility, sometimes of servility.

There are in London some thirteen statues of sovereigns—four of the brothers of sovereigns, four generals, and one philanthropist.

Many monuments in Europe were reared by the individuals they were intended to honour. Napoleon was not at all modest in this respect; but his monuments commemorate others besides himself—great events—great generals, brave legions. He knew well how to minister to the pride of the soldier, and excite a thirst for glory. His noblest monuments are the splendid bridges and elegant edifices he built in various parts of his empire. But the effect his triumphal arches have had on the soldiery is sufficient evidence that monuments exercise no small influence. History is full of such evidence. Were there no monuments but those erected by voluntary contribution, there would be very few indeed, and these few would commemorate real merit.

In America there has generally been a sentiment favourable to such erections. The monument at Bunker Hill, the Battle Monument at Baltimore, and the Naval Monument at Washington, have already been erected by voluntary contribution. An equestrian statue to General Jackson at Washington is now about being cast in bronze, and we have seen how, almost without observation or notice, a beginning has been made in the National Monument.

Besides these there is scarcely a large city in the country where something of the kind is not proposed; and the difficulty has generally been that the plan adopted was on so extravagant a scale as to render it doubtful whether any subscriber could ever see it completed.

SOUTH METROPOLITAN SCHOOLS COMPETITION.—For the information of your correspondent, "T. S. Edwards," I beg to state that I was the successful competitor for the above schools; and I am surprised that it is needful to ask the question, because every competitor is entitled to know the name of the architect whose design is selected in any competition whatever; and this information might have been obtained if asked for, though I think it should be applied without the asking. The idea of building is not abandoned, but is only in abeyance, in consequence of some legal impediments as to site, funds, &c. I quite agree with Mr. Edwards's sentiments in respect to competitions.—EDWIN NASH.

COMMON SENSE IN ARCHITECTURE.

It is probable that the members of our profession generally will not think it necessary to make any reply to the communication of Mr. Fergusson in *THE BUILDER* of last week, as it carries its own refutation with it; nevertheless, for fear the public, both British and foreign, should consider that we all acquiesce in the observations it contains, I venture to trouble you with a few remarks thereon.

The principal, nay, for aught I can see, the only reason why Mr. Fergusson lauds Mr. Paxton for the design of the Exhibition building in the Park is for discarding all precedent and avoiding the sin of copyism. Now, has Mr. Paxton done this, and has he striven out anything new? I do not hesitate to say no.

Either, as Mr. Fergusson observes, "he was profoundly ignorant of or profoundly despised Vitruvius and his disciples," probably the former, as I am unwilling to think so badly of Mr. Paxton as to imagine that he would despise talent in another; and therefore, knowing little of architecture as a fine art, he fell back on the only precedent at his command, and gave us a copy, on a gigantic scale, of a greenhouse, without any claim to beauty either in its general mass or its details, with the exception only of the great transept, and that, as Mr. Fergusson allows, was the suggestion of Mr. Barry; and he further admits that "had Mr. Barry's idea been adopted of carrying the same roof down the whole length of the central aisle" the building would then have had some pretensions to architectural beauty,* and yet in the very next sentence Mr. Fergusson proceeds to say that Mr. Barry could not have made a satisfactory building of it, and that for the marvellous reason that he was an architect!

I do not write to find fault with Mr. Paxton's building, the real merits of which, those of being weather proof and suitable for the purpose of the Exhibition, will be sufficiently put to the test ere long; but simply to assert that no new principle has thereby been evolved, and to express an earnest wish, that common sense is to lead some of us to the wilful destruction, without remorse, of such buildings as the Parthenon and Colosseum Cathedral, merely to retain and admire our modern works, the remainder of us may be endowed with sufficient good sense still to love for the noble buildings that have been left us by former generations to defend them against all such barbarous attacks.†

RAPHAEL BRANDON.

SOUTH-WEST TRANSEPT, ELY CATHEDRAL.

We have from time to time noticed the progress made in the important restoration going on at Ely Cathedral, and have also occasionally given illustrations of some of the most interesting portions. Annexed we give a drawing of the interior of the south-west transept. We doubt if a more striking specimen of its particular period (Norman) can be met with in any English cathedral; and yet, until within the last few years, this portion of the building was totally neglected, and, we believe, divided from the nave by a high wall: this has been removed, the whole of the stone-work cleaned and restored, the windows filled with painted glass, and every effort made to restate the transept in something of its original beauty. At the time of our visit the small chapel on the east side was undergoing a careful and substantial restoration. A flat ceiling divided into panels has been placed over the transept, and several experiments as to colour

* This form of greenhouse would have reminded of one who had seen it very forcibly of the beautiful lately erected by Mr. Deane and Barton in the garden at New.

† Three other letters on this subject reached us too late for consideration. It is surely unnecessary for us to state that we are not to be understood as concurring in all the communications we publish.